

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TAGS: PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN TRIBUNE COMMENTS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE
FMG

1. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF TWO LENGTHY MAY 2 EDITORIAL
PIECES ON THE STUDENT PROBLEM, THE NIGERIAN TRIBUNE
MADE A NUMBER OF COMMENTS WHICH ADD UP TO A SURPRISINGLY
FRANK OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE
"OBASANJO-YAR'ADUA REGIME."

2. INTER ALIA, NIGERIAN TRIBUNE NOTES:
--FIRST OF ALL, LET IT BE SAID FOR THE AVOIDANCE
OF BOUBT, THAT THE OBASANJO-YAR'ADUA REGIME IS THE
BEST MILITARY GOVERNMENT THIS COUNTRY HAS HAD SINCE
JANUARY 15, 1966. IT IS A GOVERNMENT WHICH TRIES
HARD TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE DAY.
IT IS A MILITARY GOVERNMENT WHICH IS ADMIRABLY
WORKING ITSELF OUT OF OFFICE. NOBODY IN HIS SENSES-
NOT EVEN THE STUDENTS-WANTS SUCH A GOVERNMENT OT
COLLAPSE. AND THIS PRECEISELY IS WHY THE "NIGERIAN
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TRIBUNE" IS PARTICULARLY SAD THAT THE GOVERNMENT GOT
ITSELF INTO THE PRESENT SITUATION. IT WAS ALTOGETHER
UNNECESSARY.
--IN THE FIRST PLACE, A GOVERNMENT, EVEN A
MILITARY GOVERNMENT, ON ITS WAY OUT OF OFFICE DOES
NOT INTRODUCE RADICAL AND UNPOPULAR MEASURES DURING
ITS LAST YEAR.

--IT WAS ILL-ADVISED FOR THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT TO HAVE UNLEASHED ON THE NATION A PACKAGE OF UNPOPULAR MEASURES, MOST OF WHICH CANNOT BE CONVINCINGLY DEFENDED BY THEIR BEST FRIENDS. AND THE "NIGERIAN TRIBUNE" NUMBERS ITSELF AMONG THOSE FRIENDS.

--THE LAND USE DECREE, THE PRIVATE PRACTICE DECREE, THE INCREASE IN BOARDING AND LODGING FEES, AND THE ALL-ROUND INCREASE IN IMPORT DUTIES ARE NOT THE SORT OF PACKAGE THAT WOULD ENDEAR ANY GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE IT GOVERNS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DID NOT REQUIRE THE FIRST THREE. THE FOURTH CAN BE TOLERATED IN A PERIOD OF AUSTERITY, IF IT WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE SAID PACKAGE. IT IS A MATTER FOR DEEP REGRET THAT THE STATEMENT OF LAST WEEKEND DID NOT SHOW ANY APPRECIATION OF THESE FACTS.

--OBVIOUSLY, THE GOVERNMENT IMPLIED IN ITS STATEMENT THAT SOME POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED AND SELFISH ADULTS WERE EXPLOITING THE STUDENTS' CRISIS FOR THEIR OWN ENDS. THERE ALSO WERE THOSE THE GOVERNMENT SAW AS DISGRUNTELED ELEMENTS. OF COURSE, NO GOVERNMENT CAN SATISFY EVERYBODY BUT AS LONG AS A GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INDULGE IN LARGE-SCALE INJUSTICE, CORRUPTION, ELITISM AND PUBLIC DECEIT, IT IS BOUND TO RECEIVE THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY. ARMED WITH SUCH MAJORITY SUPPORT, ANY GOVERNMENT WOULD WITHSTAND THE ONSLAUGHT OF THOSE STUNG BY THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE (ANTI-SABOTAGE) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECREE AND THE LAND USE DECREE. SHOULD WE NOT HOWEVER ASK OURSELVES THE BASIC QUESTION: IF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES HAD NOT HANDLED THE CASE OF FEE INCREASES WITH SUCH INEPTITUDE, WOULD THERE HAVE BEEN ANYTHING FOR THE DISGRUNTLED TO EXPLOIT? LET US STOP FINDING SCAPEGOATS.

--WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, AS THEY SOMETIMES DO IN THE LIFE OF ANY GOVERNMENT, MANY GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES PREFER TO LOOK FOR SCAPEGOATS RATHER THAN ACCEPT UNPALATABLE TRUTHS AND THE REALITIES OF THE CRISIS THEY FACE. THIS FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAS DONE SO. WELL SO FAR THAT IT SHOULD NOT SUCCUMB TO SUCH CHEAP SUGGESTIONS. YAKUBU GOWON ACCEPTED THEM AND DID NOT KNOW UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE THE DEPTH OF PUBLIC FEELING AGAINST HIS REGIME. THIS GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT FALL INTO THE SAME ERROR.

--NOBODY IS USING THE STUDENTS. NOBODY IS COLLABORATING WITH THEM. NOBODY WANTS THIS ADMINISTRATION TO COLLAPSE. THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF REMAINS POPULAR. BUT THE MEASURES LISTED ABOVE, ESPECIALLY THE INCREASE IN BOARDING FEES, ARE EXTREMELY UNPOPULAR WITH MOST OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. THAT IS THE PLAIN

TRUTH.

3. FOR IBADAN: ANY COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE AUTHORS OF
MOTIVES?
WYMAN

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